

**ALTERNATIVE TRAINING DELIVERY QUESTIONS**  
**LOCAL AGENCIES**

**Definition:** For the purpose of this questionnaire, alternative training delivery methods would include any methods other than the traditional academy instructor/classroom, practical exercise, and practice-oriented skill training methods. This may include, but not limited to, computer-based training, electronic classroom, any form of distance training, TV or video format used as the primary mode of delivery (not videos used as an aid and/or part of regular instructions) such as LETN, teleconferencing, college or university courses, or any other form of non-conventional academy training.

**Total Responses: 87**

1. Have you or any of your officers ever used alternative training delivery methods for:  
Entry-level training? Yes 6 (7%) No 73 (84%)  
In-service training? Yes 52 (60%) No 27 (31%)
2. Do you or any of your officers currently use alternative training delivery methods for:  
Entry-level? Yes 5 (6%) No 75 (86%)  
In-service training? Yes 49 (56%) No 33 (38%)
3. If no, why not? **Not available: 32 (43%); availability of resources/equipment: 5 (7%); regional academy provides training: 11 (15%); entry-level training requires interaction with instructor: 3 (4%); cost prohibitive: 3 (4%).**
4. If yes, what types and how many programs of each have been used in the past calendar year? Enter total number by all that apply.  
11 (22%) electronic classroom  
10 (20%) teleconferencing  
42 (86%) computer-based training (CBT)  
4 (8%) subscriber services such as LETN  
17 (35%) college courses
5. If you or any of your officers have used CBT programs, how were they acquired?  
6 (12%) purchased/rented commercially developed programs  
27 (55%) developed by your academy staff  
7 (14%) specially developed by private contractor for you or your academy  
20 (41%) shared from other training academies/organizations  
3 (6%) other (describe) **FEMA**
6. How much did your CBT programs cost? Please list all used and the cost for each. If developed at the academy, please include costs they may have charged and any implementation costs to you such as purchase of equipment, etc. If you use a subscriber service/rent, what is your monthly charge?  
\$0 – 31 (63%) CBT - \$600 Computer trng. - \$100  
\$276 / officer/year Haz Mat \$100 Blood Borne Pathogens \$100

7. Where have you received alternative training programs offered? (check all that apply)
- 31 (63%) at your academy  
20 (41%) at specified/designated off-site locations  
30 (61%) at your agency  
15 (31%) education-oriented sites such as high schools, community colleges, universities, etc. Please indicate specific locations used. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other (list) \_\_\_\_\_  
**FMEA ; Any on-line computer: 3 (6%)**
8. How is usage monitored?
- 5 (10%) log book  
12 (24%) on-site monitor  
25 (51%) computer log-on/log-off  
31 (63%) academy staff  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other (list) **On-line test 2; certificate 2; supervisor; professor**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
9. What constitutes successful completion?
- 19 (39%) attendance for complete program  
13 (27%) programmed advancement through each section/unit based on completion of previous section/unit  
49 (100%) completing and passing a test  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other (list) **receiving certificates: 2; doing the course work.**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
10. How is the quality of alternative training programs determined?
- 9 (18%) product reviews  
26 (53%) academy/agency staff review (who does the reviews?)  
41 (84%) DCJS approval  
9 (18%) professional association endorsement  
12 (24%) college certification  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other (list) **other evaluation: 3; personal contact with instructor; Federal mandated training.**  
 \_\_\_\_\_
11. In the past year, how many officers at your agency have used alternative training programs?
- 170 entry-level  
965 in-service
12. Have you realized any cost savings as a result of using alternative training delivery?
- 33 (67%) Yes (estimate amount saved, and how)  
**How: Saved Travel cost: 18 (37%); Manpower saved: 15 (31%); Didn't have to pay for training: 2 (2%);**  
**Savings: \$100-\$!50/officer; \$500/wk/officer - 2 (2%); \$7,000; \$8,100 (salary); \$10,000 – 2 (2%); Thousands – 5 (10%)**  
23 (47%) No

13. How and who tracks training credits awarded for alternative training programs?  
28 (57%) designated agency training officer  
7 (14%) supervisor  
45 (92%) academy  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other: (list)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
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14. Do you think distance learning is a viable training alternative method for:  
 Entry-level training? Yes 21 (24%) No 52 (60%)  
 Why or why not? (N) Recruits need instructor interaction – 21 (24%); (N) practical exercises require academy – 16 (18%); (N) Need structure of academy – 9 (10%); (N) other responses: quality and retention of subject matter reduced, cost, access to computers, must ensure recruits receive training that fulfills DCJS requirements, students have difficulty with CBT & unfriendly programs, most important aspect of the job is communication skills which distance learning doesn't provide.  
(Y) Can help with time, travel, and cost – 6 (7%); (Y) Valid if done well – 3 (3%); (Y) More productive and flexible – 2; (Y) Other responses: could use good instructors in other areas; can add variety; available 24/7; self-paced; tested by Federal agencies and it works; quality and diversity a plus; for educational type classes only.  
 In-service training? Yes 71 (82%) No 5 (6%)  
 Why or why not? (Y) Cost savings and effective – 16 (18%); (Y) More time on patrol – 8 (9%); (Y) Reinforces what already learned – 6 (7%); (Y) More flexible – 5 (6%); (Y) Other responses: Officers are rarely given new information and this could provide more advanced courses; opportunity to obtain better instructors; applicable to agency programs; only for seasoned officers; topics have same impact on students.  
(N) Cost; access to computers limited; students need an environment where can share experiences with officers from other areas.
15. Do you think there are limits where alternative training should **NOT** be used? Please list them and the reasons why not.  
Practical/hands-on/skills/high liability areas – 31 (36%); Entry-level – 26 (30%); Computers provide no way for questions, thus can't be sure students understand material – 7 (8%); None – 4 (5%); Instructor recertification – 3; interview and interrogation.
16. Do you think alternative/distance learning can effectively be used for training: (check all that apply)  
18 (21%) skills-oriented topics?  
68 (78%) general academic-oriented topics?  
59 (69%) criminal justice/law enforcement specific topics?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other Legal updates – 3; leadership/communication; instructor in-service; refresher training.

17. Do you currently have the resources to take advantage of training delivered via alternative methods? Yes 54 (62%) No 26 (30%)

If not, what are your limitations and what would you need to correct them?

Equipment - 13 (50%); Need computer and satellite capabilities – 6 (23%); Funding – 6 (23%); Internet capability – 6 (23%); no training room – 3 (12%); not offered by our academy.

18. Would substituting certain college courses for entry-level topics be an acceptable method of acquiring training? Yes 40 (48%) No 34 (39%)

Why or why not? (Y) Must be DCJS certified and cover all training objectives – 9 (23%); (Y) Promotes getting degree – 5 (13%); (Y) Colleges provide the same level of training – 4 (10%); (Y) other responses: better for career development; English skill continue to be a problem, CC's can help; specializing courses more challenging; CC's are local; best possible solution; limit to academic courses like law.

(N) Doesn't cover DCJS objectives and/or have structure needed – 14 (41%); (N) Entry-level training is more practical experiences – 8 (24%); (N) colleges teaches theory and not Va. specific material – 5 (16%); (N) no way to know if courses are equivalent to training – 4 (10%); (N) other responses: liability needs to be attached; training objectives need to be tested at 100%; methods of learning not suited for everyone.

Would it reduce your training costs? Yes 14 (16%) No 46 (53%)

If yes, by how much per school? (Please give an estimated percentage cost and a dollar figure.)

25 % or about \$3,000; 50% of salary

19. Please indicate what it would take for any alternative training method to be useful and cost effective for your agency: State provide funding and equipment – 12 (14%); Standardized and approved by DCJS – 10 (11%); be available and assessable – 10 (11%); delivery methods that would take officers away from job – 8 (9%); cost effective – 7 (8%); video-conferencing to save travel cost – 5 (6%); other responses: needs to be hands-on interactive – 3; use only for in-service – 3; topics should be current with full tech. support – 3; CBT – 2; compatible with training schedule – 2; be relevant to department needs – 2; be able to train at agency office – 2; needs further study – 2.
20. How do you think colleges can be used to more effectively obtain certain areas of training? Provide more advanced training for seasoned officers – 7 ; provide short specialized training via e-learning – 5; CC's need to obtain DCJS certification on specific courses – 5; give classes in 4-8 hour blocks – 4; increase available related courses – 4; cannot, training and academics are separate – 7; Much is the same as academy training and would be good for electronic class room – 3; use police trainers to teach.

21. Do you think criminal justice academies should share information, training programs, ideas, resources, etc., with each other in order to enhance training and reduce costs?  
Yes **78 (90%)** No **2**
22. What do you think academies can do to reduce costs, yet maintain quality training?  
**Share resources and training programs – 12 (14%); have already cut as much as they can – 7 (8%); use distance learning delivery methods to cut cost – 5; use more department instructors that are skilled and creative – 5; focus and strengthen basics/necessities (what agencies need) and eliminate the excess – 4; become more standardized statewide – 3.**
23. What, if any, changes would you recommend to the way training is delivered in Virginia so as to be more cost effective, consistent, and ensure quality? **Need better and more uniform standards for continuity in academies – 8 (10%); use alternative train methods – 8; no problem, leave as is – 6; DCJS approve training, but streamline process – 4; need to out more money into training – 3.**
24. Please add anything else you think would be helpful in assessing alternative training delivery methods as it relates to costs, usage, quality control, effectiveness, or other considerations: **No consistent responses, some of different ideas are as follows: Administer alternative training through DCJS; award training credit for internet courses; utilize other nationally recognized sources for basic and in-service training; have paid instructors at regional academies, not volunteers – 2; in-service can be conducted cheaper with electronic means; has already been proven effective; state needs to fund academies adequately; making a mistake to allow training on-line, students miss opportunity to interact with each other; more topics for dispatchers; need more training on available data bases used for investigating crime; have a compiled list of what is available and successful – 2; more cost effective to use academy for small agencies; get away from military style training; all DCJS certified academies should have equal status with training universally accepted by all agencies; all lesson plans should be available on-line; agencies need more funding for training and equipment; don't like idea of alternative training methods.**